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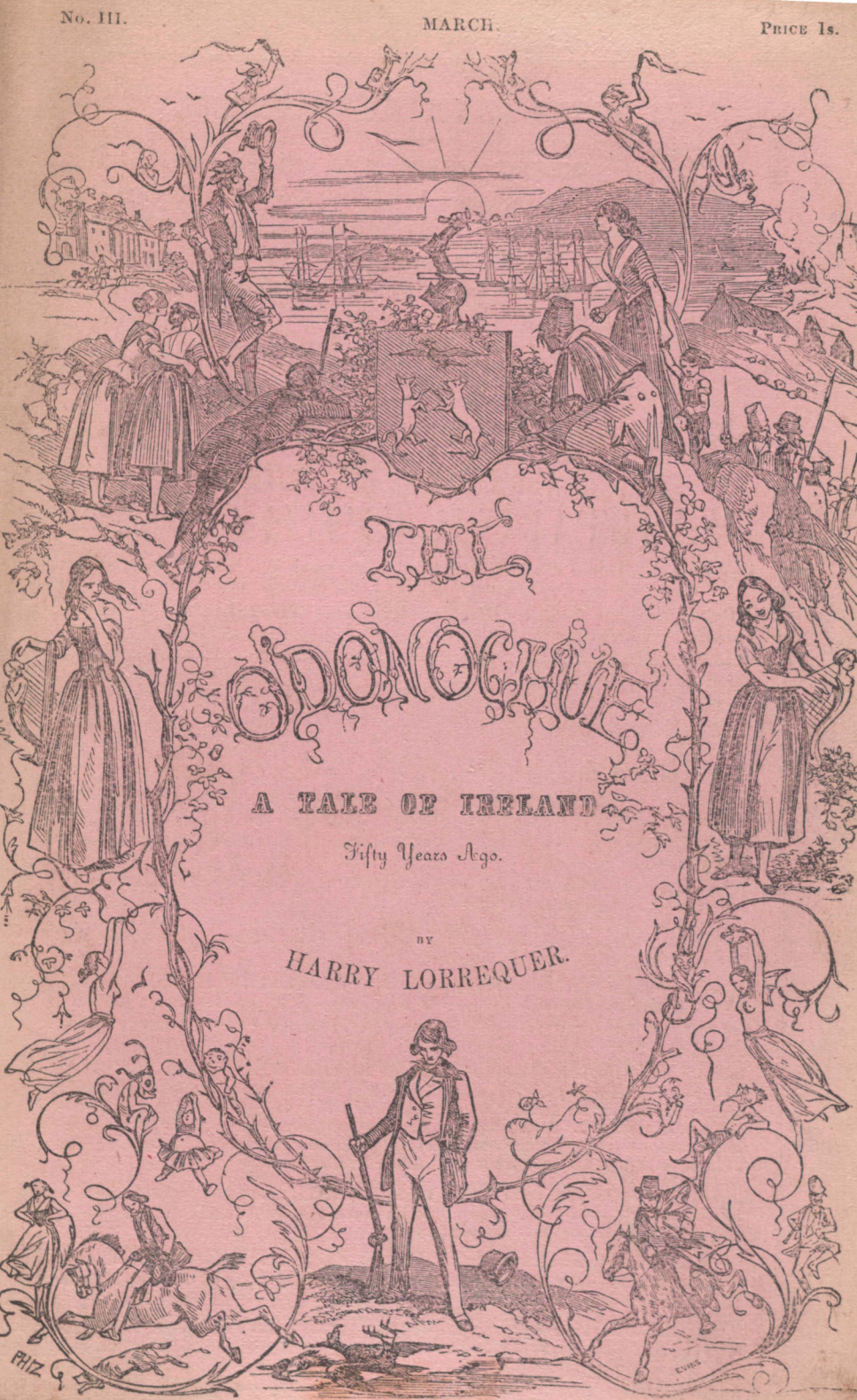

THE O'DONOGHUE

A TALE OF IRELAND

Fifty Years Ago.

BY

HARRY LORREQUER.

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Roache's return to the O'Donoghue Castle.

Terry, Sir Marmaduke, & Sybella

CHAPTER IX.

A DOCTOR'S VISIT.

THE night was far advanced as the doctor arrived at the O'Donoghue's nouse, drenched with rain, and fatigued by the badness of the roads, where his gig was often compelled to proceed for above a mile at a foot pace. Doctor Roach was not in the most bland of tempers as he reached his destination; and, of a verity, his was a nature that stood not in any need of increased acerbity. The doctor was a type of a race at one time very general, but now, it is hard to say wherefore, nearly extinct in Ireland. But so it is; the fruits of the earth change not in course of years more strikingly, than the fashions of men's minds. The habits, popular enough in one generation, survive as eccentricities in another, and are extinct in a third.

There was a pretty general impression in the world, some sixty or seventy years back, that a member of the medical profession, who had attained to any height in his art, had a perfect right to dispense with all the amenities and courtesies which regulate social life among less privileged persons. The concessions now only yielded to a cook, were then extended to a physician; and in accordance with the privilege by which he administered most nauseous doses to the body, he was suffered to extend his dominion, and apply scarcely more palatable remedies to the minds of his patients. As if the ill-flavoured draughts had tinctured the spirit that conceived them, the tone of his thoughts usually smacked of bitters, until at last he seemed to have realized, in his own person, the conflicting agencies of the pharmacopœia, and was at once acrid, and pungent, and soporific together.

The College of Physicians could never have reproached Doctor Roach with conceding a single iota of their privileges. Never was there one who more stoutly maintained, in his whole practice through life, the blessed immunity of "the Doctor." The magic word "Recipe," which headed his prescriptions, suggested a tone of command to all he said, and both his drugs and dicta were swallowed without remonstrance.

It may not be a flattering confession for humanity, but it is assuredly a true one, that the exercise of power, no matter how humble its sphere, or how limited its range, will eventually generate a tyrannical habit

in him who wields it. Doctor Roach was certainly not the exception to this rule. The Czar himself was not more autocrat in the steppes of Russia, than was he in any house where sickness had found entrance. From that hour he planted his throne there. All the caprices of age, all the follies of childhood, the accustomed freedoms of home, the indulgences which grow up by habit in a household, had to give way before a monarch more potent than all, "the Doctor." Men bore the infliction with the same patient endurance they summoned to sustain the malady. They felt it to be grievous and miserable, but they looked forward to a period of relief, and panted for the arrival of the hour, when the disease and the doctor would take their departure together.

If the delight they experienced at such a consummation was extreme, so to the physician it savoured of ingratitude. "I saved his life yesterday," saith he, "and see how happy he is, to dismiss me to-day." But who is ever grateful for the pangs of a toothache?—or what heart can find pleasure in the memory of sententiousness, senna, and low diet?

Never were the blessings of restored health felt with a more suitable thankfulness than by Doctor Roach's patients. To be free once more from his creaking shoes, his little low dry cough, his harsh accents, his harsher words, his contradictions, his sneers, and his selfishness, shed a halo around recovery, which the friends of the patient could not properly appreciate.

Such was the individual whose rumbling and rattling vehicle now entered the court-yard of Carrig-na-curra, escorted by poor Terry, who had accompanied him the entire way on foot. The distance he had come, his more than doubts about the fee, the severity of the storm, were not the accessories likely to amend the infirmities of his temper; while a still greater source of irritation than all existed in the mutual feeling of dislike between him and Sir Archibald M'Nab. An occasional meeting at a little boarding-house in Killarney, which Sir Archy was in the habit of visiting each summer for a few days—the only recreation he permitted himself—had cultivated this sentiment to such a pitch, that they never met without disagreement, or parted without an actual quarrel. The doctor was a democrat, and a Romanist of the first water; Sir Archy was a member of the Scottish Episcopal Church; and, whatever might have been his early leanings in politics, and in whatever companionship his active years were passed, experience had taught him the fallacy of many opinions, which owe any appearance of truth or stability they possess, to the fact, that they have never advanced beyond the stage of speculative notions, into the realms of actual and practical existence;—but,

above all, the prudent Scotchman dreaded the prevalence of these doctrines among young and unsettled minds, ever ready to prefer the short and hazardous career of fortune, to the slow and patient drudgery of daily industry.

If the doctor anticipated but little enjoyment in the society of Sir Archy, neither did the latter hope for any pleasure to himself from Roach's company. However, as the case of poor Herbert became each hour more threatening, the old man resolved to bury in oblivion every topic of mutual disagreement, and, so long as the doctor remained in the house, to make every possible or impossible concession to conciliate the good-will of one, on whose services so much depended.

"Do ye hear?" cried Roach in a harsh voice to Kerry, who was summoned from the kitchen-fire to take charge of his horse; "let the pony have a mash of bran—a hot mash, and don't leave him till he's dry."

"Never fear, sir," replied Kerry, as he led the jaded and way-worn beast into the stable, "I'll take care of him as if he was a racer;" and then, as Roach disappeared, added—"I'd like to see myself strapping the likes of him—an ould mountaineer. A mash of bran, indeed! Cock him up with bran! Begorra, 'tis thistles and docks he's most used to;" and, with this sage reflection on the beast's habits, he locked the stable door, and resumed his former place beside the blazing turf fire.

O'Donoghue's reception of the doctor was most cordial. He was glad to see him on several accounts. He was glad to see any one who could tell him what was doing in the world, from which all his intercourse was cut off; he was glad, because the supper was waiting an hour and a half beyond its usual time, and he was getting uncommonly hungry; and, lastly, he really felt anxious about Herbert, whenever by any chance his thoughts took that direction.

"How are you, Roach?" cried he, advancing to meet him with an extended hand. "This is a kind thing of you—you've had a dreadful day, I fear."

"D—n me, if I ever saw it otherwise in this confounded glen. I never set foot in it, that I wasn't wet through."

"We have our share of rain, indeed," replied the other, with a good-humoured laugh; "but if we have storm, we have shelter."

Intentionally misunderstanding the allusion, and applying to the ruined mansion the praise bestowed on the bold mountains, the doctor threw a despairing look around the room, and repeated the word "shelter" in a voice far from complimentary.

The O'Donoghue's blood was up in a moment. His brow contracted and his cheek flushed, as, in a low and deep tone, he said—

"It is a crazy old concern. You are right enough—neither the walls nor the company within them, are like what they once were."

The look with which these words were given, recalled the doctor to a sense of his own impertinence; for, like certain tethered animals, who never become conscious of restraint till the check of the rope lays them on their back, nothing short of such a home-blow could have staggered his self-conceit.

"Ay, ay," muttered he, with a cackling apology for a laugh, "time is telling on us all.—But I'm keeping the supper waiting."

The duties of hospitality were always enough to make O'Donoghue forget any momentary chagrin, and he seated himself at the table with all his wonted good-humour and affability.

As the meal proceeded, the doctor inquired about the sick boy, and the circumstances attending his illness; the interest he bestowed on the narrative mainly depending on the mention of Sir Marmaduke Travers's name, whose presence in the country he was not aware of before, and from whose residence he began already to speculate on many benefits to himself.

"They told me," continued O'Donoghue, "that the lad behaved admirably. In fact, if the old weir-rapid be any thing like what I remember it, the danger was no common one. There used to be a current there strong enough to carry away a dozen horsemen."

"And how is the young lady? Is she nothing the worse from the cold, and the drenching, and the shock of the accident?"

"Faith, I must confess it, I have not had the grace to ask after her. Living as I have been for some years back, has left me sadly in arrear with every demand of the world. Sir Marmaduke was polite enough to say he'd call on me; but there is a still greater favour he could bestow, which is, to leave me alone."

"There was a law-suit or dispute of some kind or other between you, was there not?"

"There is something of that kind," said O'Donoghue, with an air of annoyance at the question; "but these are matters gentlemen leave to their lawyers, and seek not to mix themselves up with."

"The strong purse is the sinew of war," muttered the inexorable doctor; "and they tell me he is one of the wealthiest men in England."

"He may be, for aught I know or care."

"Well, well," resumed the other, after a long deliberative pause,

"there's no knowing how this little adventure may turn out. If your son saved the girl's life, I scarcely think he could press you so hard about ——"

"Take care, sir," broke in O'Donoghue, and with the words he seized the doctor's wrist in his strong grasp; "take care how you venture to speak of affairs which no wise concern you;" then, seeing the terrified look his speech called up, he added—"I have been very irritable latterly, and never desire to talk on these subjects; so, if you please, we'll change the topic."

The door was cautiously opened at this moment, and Kerry presented himself, with a request from Sir Archibald, that, as soon as Doctor Roach found it convenient, he would be glad to see him in the sick-room.

"I am ready now," said the doctor, rising from his chair, and not by any means sorry at the opportunity of escaping a *tête-a-tête* he had contrived to render so unpalatable to both parties. As he mounted the stairs, he continued in broken phrases to inveigh against the house and the host in a half soliloquy—"A tumble-down old barrack it is—not fifty shillings worth of furniture under the roof—the ducks were as tough as soaked parchment—and where's the fee to come from—I wish I knew that—unless I take one of these old devils instead of it;" and he touched the frame of a large, damp, discoloured portrait of some long-buried ancestor, several of which figured on the walls of the stair-case.

"The boy is worse—far worse," whispered a low, but distinct voice beside him. "His head is now all astray—he knows no one."

Doctor Roach seemed vexed at the ceremony of salutation being forgotten in Sir Archibald's eagerness about the youth, and drily answered—

"I have the honour to see you well, sir, I hope."

"There is one here very far from well," resumed Sir Archy, neither caring for, nor considering the speech. "We have lost too much time already—I trust ye may na be too late now."

The doctor made no reply, but rudely taking the candle from his hand, walked towards the bed—

"Ay, ay," muttered he, as he beheld the lustrous eyes and wide-spread pupils—the rose-red cheek, and dry, cracked lips of the youth; "he has it sure enough."

"Has what?—what is it?"

"The fever—brain fever, and the worst kind of it too."

"And there is danger then?" whispered M'Nab.

"Danger, indeed! I wonder how many come through it. Pshaw! there's no use trying to count his pulse;" and he threw the hand

rudely back upon the bed. "That's going as fast as ever his father went with the property." A harsh, low, cackling laugh followed this brutal speech, which demanded all Sir Archy's predetermined endurance to suffer unchecked.

"Do you know me?" said the doctor, in the loud voice used to awaken the dormant faculty of hearing. "Do you know me?"

"Yes," replied the boy, staring steadfastly at him.

"Well, who am I, then? Am I your father?"

A vacant gaze was all the answer.

"Tell me, am I your father?"

No reply followed.

"Am I your uncle, then?" said the doctor, still louder.

The word, "uncle," seemed to strike upon some new chord of his awakened sense: a faint smile played upon his parched lips, and his eyes wandered from the speaker, as if in search of some object, till they fell upon Sir Archy, as he stood at the foot of the bed, when suddenly his whole countenance was lighted up, and he repeated the word, "uncle," to himself in a voice indescribably sweet and touching.

"He has na forgotten me," murmured M'Nab, in a tone of deep emotion. "My ain dear boy—he knows me yet."

"You agitate him too much," said Roach, whose nature had little sympathy with the feelings of either. "You must leave me alone here to examine him myself."

M'Nab said not a word, but, with noiseless step, stole from the room. The doctor looked after him as he went, and then followed to see that the door was closed behind. This done, he beckoned to Kerry, who still remained, to approach, and deliberately seated himself in a chair near the window.

"Tell me, my good fellow," said he, affecting an air of confidence as he spoke, "an't they all broke here? Isn't the whole thing smashed?"

"Broke—smashed!" repeated Kerry, as he held up both hands in feigned astonishment; "'tis a droll smash: begorra, I never see money as plenty this many a year. Sure av there wasn't lashings of it, would he be looking out for carriage-horses, and buying hunters, not to say putting the kennel in order."

"Is it truth you are telling?" said Roach, in astonishment.

"True as my name is Kerry O'Leary. We offered Lanty Lawler a hundred and twenty guineas on Friday last for a match wheeler, and we're not off of him yet; he's a big brown horse, with a star on his face; and the cob for the master cost forty pounds. He'll be here to-morrow, or next day, sure ye'll see him yourself."

"The place is falling to ruin—the roof will never last the winter," broke in the doctor.

"Well, and whose fault is it, but that spalpeen Murphy's, that won't set the men to work till he gets oak timber from the Black Say—'tis the finest wood in the world, they tell me, and lasts for ever and ever."

"But, don't they owe money every where in the country? There isn't a little shop in Killarney without an account of their's in it."

"Of course they do, and the same in Cork—ay, and in Tralee, for the matter of that. Would you have them not give encouragement to more places nor one? There's not one of those crayturs would send in their bill—no, though we do be asking for it, week after week. They're afraid of losing the custom; and I'll engage now, they do be telling you they can't get their money by hook or by crook; that's it—I knew it well."

The doctor meditated long on these strange revelations, so very opposite to all he had heard of the circumstances of the O'Donoghues; and while his own convictions were strongly against Kerry's narrative, that worthy man's look of simplicity and earnest truth puzzled him considerably, and made him hesitate which side to credit.

After a long pause, from which the incoherent ravings of the sick boy aroused him, he looked up at Kerry, and then, with a motion of his thumb towards the bed, he muttered—

"He's going fast."

"Going fast!" echoed Kerry, in a voice very different from his former accent. "Oh, wirra! there's nothing so bad as death! Distress and poverty is hard enough, but that's the raal misfortune."

A dry sarcastic grin from the doctor seemed to say that poor Kerry's secret was discovered. The allusion to want of means came too naturally not to be suggested by present circumstances; and the readiness of Doctor Roach's apprehension clinched the discovery at once.

"We'll go down now," said the doctor; "I believe I know the whole state of the case;" and, with these words of ambiguous meaning, he returned to the drawing-room.

CHAPTER X.

AN EVENING AT "MARY" M'KELLY'S

If sorrow had thrown its sombre shadow over the once-proud house of the O'Donoghue, within whose walls now noiseless footsteps stole along, and whispered words were spoken: a very different scene presented itself at the small hostel of Mary M'Kelly. There, before the ample fire-place, a quarter of a sheep was roasting—while various utensils of cookery, disposed upon and around the fire, diffused a savoury odour through the apartment. A table, covered with a snow-white napkin, and containing covers for a party of six, occupied the middle of the room; cups and drinking vessels of richly chased silver, silver forks and spoons, of handsome pattern, were there also—strange and singular spectacle beneath the humble thatch of a way-side cabin. Mary herself displayed in her toilet a more than usual care and attention, and wore in her becoming cap, with a deep lace border, a bouquet of tri-colored ribbons, coquettishly knotted, and with the ends falling loosely on her neck. While she busied herself in the preparation for the table, she maintained from time to time a running conversation with a person who sat smoking in the chimney corner. Although screened from the glare of the fire, the light which was diffused around showed enough of the dress and style of the wearer to recognize him at once for Lanty Lawler, the horse-dealer. His attitude, as he lolled back on one chair, and supported his legs on another, bespoke the perfection of ease, while in the jaunty manner he held the long pipe-stick between his fingers, could be seen the affectation of one who wished to be thought at home, as well as to feel so.

"What hour did they mention, Mary?" said he, after a pause of some minutes, during which he puffed his pipe assiduously.

"The gossoon that came from Beerhaven, said it would be nine o'clock at any rate; but sure it's nigher to ten now. They were to come up on the flood tide. Whisht, what was that?—Wasn't that like the noise of wheels?"

"No; that's the wind, and a severe night it is too. I'm thinking, Mary, the storm may keep them back."

"Not a bit of it; there's a creek down there, they tell me, safer nor

e'er a harbour in Ireland; and you'd never see a bit of a vessel till you were straight over her: and sure it's little they mind weather. That Captain Jack, as they call him, says there's no time for business like a gale of wind. The last night they were here there was two wrecks in the bay."

"I mind it well, Mary. Faix, I never felt a toast so hard to drink as the one they gave after supper."

"Don't be talking about it," said Mary, crossing herself devoutly; "they said it out of devilment, sorra more."

"Well, may be so," muttered he sententiously. "They're wild chaps any way, and they've a wild life of it."

"Troth, if I was a man, tis a life I'd like well," said Mary, with a look of resolute determination, well becoming the speech. "Them's the fine times they have, going round the world for sport, and nothing to care for—as much goold as they'd ask—fine clothes—the best of eating and drinking; sure there's not one of them would drink out of less than silver."

"Faix, they may have iron round their ancles for it, after all, Mary."

"Sorra bit of it—the jail isn't built yet, that would howld them. What's that noise now? That's them. Oh, no; it's the water running down the mountain."

"Well, I wish they'd come any way," said Lanty; "for I must be off early to-morrow—I've an order from the ould banker here above, for six beasts, and I'd like to get a few hours' sleep before morning."

"'Tis making a nice penny you are there, Lanty," said Mary, with a quizzical look from the corner of her eye.

"A good stroke of business, sure enough, Mary," replied he, laughingly. "What d'ye think I did with him yesterday morning? I heerd here, ye know, what happened to the grey mare I bought from Mark O'Donoghue—that she was carried over the weir-gash and drowned. What does I do, but goes up to the Lodge and asks for Sir Marmaduke; and says I, 'I'm come, sir, to offer a hundred and fifty for the little mare I sould you the other day for a hundred; 'tis only now I found out her real value, and I can get two hundred for her in Cork, the day I bring her up; and sure your honour wouldn't prevent a poor man making a trifle in the way of his trade.' 'You're an honest fellow, Lanty,' says he—divil a lie in it Mary, don't be laughing—'you're an honest fellow; and although I cannot let you have your mare back again, for she was killed last night, you shall have your own price for the four carriage-horses and the two roadsters I ordered.' With that I began blubbering about the mare, and swore I was as fond of her as if she

was my sister. I wish you'd seen his daughter then; upon my conscience it was as good as a play. 'They have so much feelin',' says she to her father. 'For fun,' says I to myself. O murther, murther. Mary, and them's the people that rules us!"

"Omadhauns they are, the devil a more!" interposed Mary, whose hearty contempt for the Saxon originated in the facility by which he could be imposed upon.

"That's what I'm always saying," said Lanty. "I'd rather have the chaytin' than the bayting of John Bull, any day! You'll humbug him out of his shirt, and faix it's the easiest way to get it after all."

"It's a mane way, Lanty," interposed Mary, with a look of pride; "it's a dirty, mane way, and doesn't become an Irishman."

"Wait till the time comes, Mary M'Kelly," said Lanty, half angrily, "and maybe I'd be as ready as another."

"I wish it was come," said Mary, sighing; "I wish to the Virgin it was; I'm tired heerin' of the preparations. Sorra one of me knows what more they want, if the stout heart was there. There's eight barrels of gunpowder in that rock there," said she, in a low whisper, "behind yer back—you needn't stir, Lanty. Begorra, if a spark was in it, 'twould blow you and me, and the house that's over us, as high as Hungry mountain."

"The angels be near us!" said Lanty, making the sign of the cross.

"Ay," resumed Mary, "and muskets for a thousand min, and pikes for two more. There's saddles and bridles, eighteen hogsheads full."

"True enough," chimed in Lanty; "and I have an order for five hundred cavalry horses—the money to be paid out of the Bank of France. Musha, I wish it was some place nearer home."

"Is it doubting them ye are, Lanty Lawler?"

"No, not a bit; but it's always time enough to get the beasts, when we see the riders. I could mount two thousand men in a fortnight, any day, if there was money to the fore; ay, and mount them well, too: not the kind of devils I give the government, that won't stand three days of hard work. Musha, Mary, but it's getting very late; that mutton will be as dry as a stick."

"The French likes it best that way," said Mary, with a droll glance, as though to intimate she guessed the speaker's object. "Take a look down the road, Lanty, and try if you can hear any one coming."

Lanty arose from his comfortable corner with evident reluctance, and laid down his pipe with a half sigh, as he moved slowly towards the door of the cabin, which having unbarred he issued forth into the darkness.

"It's likely I'd hear any thing such a night as this," grumbled he to himself, "with the trees snapping across, and the rocks tumbling down! It's a great storm entirely."

"Is there any sign of them, Lanty?" cried Mary, as she held the door ajar, and peeped out into the gloomy night.

"I couldn't see my hand fornint me."

"Do you hear nothing?"

"Faix I hear enough over my head; that was thunder! Is there any fear of it getting at the powder, Mary?"

"Divil a fear; don't be unasy about that," said the stout-hearted Mary. "Can you see nothing at all?"

"Sorra a thing, barrin' the lights up at Carrig-na-curra; they're moving about there, at a wonderful rate. What's O'Donoghue doing at all?"

"'Tis the young boy, Herbert, is sick," said Mary, as she opened the door to admit Lanty once more. "The poor child is in a fever. Kerry O'Leary was down here this evening for lemons for a drink for him. Poor Kerry! he was telling me, himself has a sore time of it, with that ould Scotchman that's up there; nothing ever was like him for scoulding, and barging, and abusing; and O'Donoghue now minds nothing inside or out, but sits all day long in the big chair, just as if he was asleep. Maybe he does take a nap sometimes, for he talks of bailiffs, and writs, and all them things. Poor ould man! it's a bad end, when the law comes with the grey hairs!"

"They've a big score with yourself, I'll be bound," said Lanty inquiringly.

"Troth, I'd like to see myself charge them with any thing," said she, indignantly. "It's to them and their's I owe the roof that's over me, and my father, and my father's father before me owes it. Musha, it would become me to take their money, for a trifle of wine and spirits, and tay and tobacco, as if I wasn't proud to see them send down here—the raal ould stock that's in it! Lanty, it must be very late by this. I'm afeard something's wrong up in the bay."

"'Tis that same I was thinking myself," said Lanty, with a sly look towards the roasted joint, whose savoury odour was becoming a temptation overmuch for resistance.

"You've a smart baste in the stable," said Mary; "he has eaten his corn by this time, and must be fresh enough; just put the saddle on him, Lanty dear, and ride down the road a mile or two—do, and good luck attend you."

There never was a proposition less acceptable to the individual to

whom it was made; to leave a warm fire-side was bad enough, but to issue forth on a night it would have been inhumanity to expose a dog to, was far too much for his compliance; yet Lanty did not actually refuse; no, he had his own good reasons for keeping fair with Mary M'Kelly; so he commenced a system of diplomatic delay and discussion, by which time at least might be gained, in which it was possible the long-expected guests would arrive, or the project fall to the ground on its own merits.

"Which way will they come, Mary?" said he, rising from his seat.

"Up the glen, to be sure—what other way could they from the bay. You'll hear them plain enough, for they shout and sing every step of the road, as if it was their own; wild devils they are."

"Sing is it? musha, now, do they sing?"

"Ay, faix, the drollest songs ever ye heerd; French and Roosian songs—sorra the likes of them going at all."

"Light hearts they have of their own."

"You may say that, Lanty Lawler; fair weather or foul, them's the boys never change; but come now be alive, and get out the baste."

"I'm going, I'm going; it's myself would like to hear them sing a Roosian song. Whisht! what's that? did ye hear a shout there?"

"Here they are; that's them," said Mary, springing towards the door, and withdrawing the bolt, while a smart knock was heard, and the same instant, a voice called out—

"Holloa! house ahoy!'

The door at the moment flew open, and a short, thick-set looking man, in a large boat cloak, entered, followed by a taller figure, equally muffled. The former dropping his heavy envelope, and throwing off an oil-skin cap from his head, held out his arms wide as, he said—

"*Marie, ma mie! embrasse moi;*" and then, not waiting for a compliance with the request, sprang forward, and clasped the buxom landlady in his arms, and kissed her on each cheek, with an air compounded of true feeling, and stage effect.

"Here's my friend and travelling companion, Henry Talbot, come to share your hospitality, Mary," said he in English, to which the slightest foreign accent lent a tone of recitative. "One of us, Mary—one of us."

The individual alluded to had by this time dropped his cloak to the ground, and displayed the figure of a slight and very young man, whose features were singularly handsome, save for a look of great effeminacy; his complexion was fair as a girl's, and, flushed by exercise, the tint upon his cheek was of a pale rose colour; he was dressed in a riding

coat, and top boots, which, in the fashion of the day, were worn short, and wrinkled around the leg; his hair he wore without powder, and long upon his neck; a heavy riding whip, ornamented with silver, the only weapon he carried, composed his costume—one as unlike his companion's as could be.

Captain Jacques Flahault was a stout-built, dark-complexioned fellow, of some four or five and forty; his face a grotesque union of insolence and drollery; the eyes black as jet, shaded by brows so arched, as to give always the idea of laughing to a countenance, the lower part of which, shrouded in beard and moustache, was intended to look stern and savage.

His dress was a short blue frock, beneath which he wore a jersey shirt, striped in various colours, across which a broad buff leather belt, loosely slung, supported four pistols and a dirk; jack boots reached about the middle of the thigh, and were attached to his waist by thongs of strong leather, no needless precaution apparently, as in their looseness the wearer might at any moment have stepped freely from them; a black handkerchief, loosely knotted round his neck, displayed a throat brawny and massive as a bull's, and imparted to the whole head an appearance of great size—the first impression every stranger conceived regarding him.

"Ah! ah! Lawler, you here; how goes it, my old friend? Sit down here, and tell me all your rogueries since we parted. *Par St. Pierre*, Henry, this is the veriest *fripon* in the kingdom"—Talbot bowed, and with a sweetly courteous smile saluted Lanty, as if accepting the speech in the light of an introduction—"a fellow that in the way of his trade could cheat the Saint Père himself."

"Where's the others, Captain Jack?" said Mary, whose patience all this time endured a severe trial—"where's the rest?"

"*Place pour la potage! Ma Mie!*—soup before a story; you shall hear every thing by and by. Let us have the supper at once."

Lanty chimed in a willing assent to this proposition, and in a few moments the meat smoked upon the table, around which the whole party took their places with evident good-will.

While Mary performed her attentions as hostess, by heaping up each plate, and ever supplying the deficiency caused by the appetite of the guests, the others eat on like hungry men. Captain Jacques alone intermingling with the duties of the table, a stray remark from time to time.

"*Ventre bleu!* how it blows; if it veers more to the southard, there will be a heavy strain on that cable. *Trinquons mon ami. Trinquons toujours; Ma belle Marie*, you eat nothing."

"'Tis unasy I am, Captain Jack, about what's become of the others," said Mrs. M'Kelly.

"Another bumper, *Ma Mie,* and I'm ready for the story—the more as it is a brief one. *Allons donc*—now for it. We left the bay about nine o'clock, or half-past, perhaps, intending to push forward to the glen at once, and weigh with the morning's tide, for it happens that this time our cargo is destined for a small creek, on the north-west coast; our only business here being to land my friend, Harry"—here Talbot bowed and smiled—"and to leave two hogsheads of Bourdeaux, for that very true-hearted, kind, *brave homme,* Hemsworth, at the Lodge there. You remember last winter we entered into a compact with him to stock his cellar, provided no information of our proceedings reached the revenue from any quarter. Well, the wine was safely stored in one of the caves on the coast, and we started with a light conscience; we had neither despatches nor run-brandy to trouble us—nothing to do but eat our supper; saluer madame"—here he turned round, and with an air of mock respect kissed Mary's hand—"and get afloat again. As we came near the 'Lodge,' I determined to make my visit a brief one; and so leaving all my party, Harry included, outside, I approached the house, which, to my surprise, showed lights from nearly every window. This made me cautious, and so I crept stealthily to a low window, across which the curtain was but loosely drawn, and *Mort de ma vie!* what did I behold, but the prettiest face in Europe. *Une ange de beauté.* She was leaning over a table copying a drawing, or a painting of some sort or other. *Téte bleu!* here was a surprise. I had never seen her before, although I was with Hemsworth a dozen times."

"Go on—go on," said Lanty, whose curiosity was extreme to hear what happened next.

"*Eh bien*—I tried the sash, but it was fastened. I then went round the house, and examined the other windows, one after the other—all the same. *Que faire?* I thought of knocking boldly at the back-door, but then I should have no chance of a peep at *la belle* in that way."

"What did you want with a peep at her?" asked Mary, gruffly.

"*Diable!* what did I want? *Pour l'admirer, l'adorer*—or, at least to make my respects, as becomes a stranger, and a Frenchman. *Pursuivons.* There was no *entrée,* without some noise—so I preferred the room she was in, to any other, and gently disengaging my dirk, I slipped it between the two sashes, to lift up the latch that fastened them. *Mort bleu!* the weapon slipped, and came slap through the pane, with a tremendous fracas. She started up, and screamed—there

was no use in any more delay. I put my foot through the window, and pushed open the sash at once—but before I was well in the room, bells were ringing in every quarter of the house, and men's voices calling aloud, and shouting to each other—when, suddenly, the door opened, and whiz went a pistol-ball close by my head, and shattered the shutter behind me. My fellows, outside, hearing the shot, unslung their pieces, and before I could get down to them, poured in a volley—why, wherefore, or upon whom, the devil himself, that instigated them, can tell. The garrison mustered strong, however, and replied—that they did, by Jove, for one of ours, Emile de Louvois, is badly wounded. I sounded the retreat, but the scoundrels would not mind me—and before I was able to prevent it, *tête bleu!* they had got round to the farm-yard, and set fire to the corn-stacks; in a second, the corn and hay blazed up, and enveloped house and all in smoke. I sounded the retreat once more, and off the villains scampered, with poor Emile, to the boat; and I, finding my worthy friend here an inactive spectator of the whole from a grove near the road, resolved not to give up my supper—and so, *me voici!*—but come, can none of you explain this affair? What is Hemsworth doing, with all this armed household, and this captive princess?"

"Is the 'Lodge' burned down?" said Lanty, whose interest in the inhabitants had a somewhat selfish origin.

"No, they got the fire under. I saw a wild-looking devil mount one of the ricks, with a great canvas sail, all wetted, and drag it over the burning stack—and before I left the place, the Lodge was quite safe."

"I'm sorry for it," said Mary, with a savage determination. "I'm sorry to the heart's core. Luck nor grace never was in the glen, since the first stone of it was laid—nor will be again, till it is a ruin! Why didn't they lay it in ashes, when they were about it?"

"Faith, it seemed to me," said Talbot, in a low soft voice, "they would have asked nothing better. I never saw such bull-dogs in my life. It was all you could do, Flahault, to call them off."

"True enough," replied Jacques, laughing. "They enjoy a *brisée* like that with all their hearts."

"The English won't stay long here, after this night," was Lanty's sage reflection, but one which he did not utter aloud in the present company. And then, in accordance with Jacques' request, he proceeded to explain by what different tenants the Lodge became occupied since his last visit; and that an English baronet and his daughter, with a household of many servants, had replaced Hemsworth and his

few domestics. At every stage of the recital, Flahault stopped the narrative, to give him time to laugh. To him the adventure was full of drollery. Even the recollection of his wounded comrade little damped his enjoyment of a scene, which might have been attended by the saddest results; and he chuckled a hundred times over what he suspected the Englishman must feel, on this, his first visit to Ireland. "I could rob the mail to-morrow, for the mere fun of reading his letters to his friends," said he. "*Mort bleu!* what a description of Irish rapparrees, five hundred in number, armed with pikes."

"I wish ye'd gave him the cause to do it," said Mary, bitterly—"what brings them here? who wants them? or looks for them?"

"You are right, Mary," said Talbot, mildly. "Ireland for the Irish!"

"Ay, Ireland for the Irish!" repeated Mary and Lanty; and the sentiment was drank with all the honours of a favoured toast.

For some time the party continued to discuss Flahault's story, and calculate on every possible turn the affair might give rise to. All agreeing, finally, on one point, that Sir Marmaduke would scarcely venture to protract his stay in a country, where his visit had been signalized by such a reception. The tone of the conversation seemed little to accord with Captain Jacques' humour, whose convivial temperament found slight pleasure in protracted or argumentative discussions of any kind.

"*Que le diable l'importe,*" cried he, at last. "This confounded talk has stopped the bottle this half-hour. Come, Talbot, let's have a song, my lad; never shake your head, *mon enfant.*——Well, then, here goes."

Thus saying, Flahault pushed back his chair a little from the table, and in a rich deep bass voice, which rung through the high rafters of the cabin, chanted out the following rude verses, to a French vaudeville air—giving the final *e* of the French words, at the end of each line, that peculiar accentuation of *a*—which made the word sound *contrabanda!*

Though this information as to Captain Jacques' performance seems of little moment, yet such was the fact, that any spirit the doggerel possessed could only be attributed to the manner of the singer, and the effect produced by the intonation we have mentioned.

LA CONTRABANDE.

A bumper, "mes enfans," to swallow your care,
A full bumper, we pledge, "a L'Irlande;"
The land of "belles femmes—le pays de bonne chere,
"Et toujours de la Contrabande."

Some like to make love, and some like to make war,
Some of beauty obey "la commande;"
But what is a glance from an eye, "bleu," or "noir,"
Except it be, "la Contrabande."

When a prince takes the cash that a peasant can't spare,
And lets him lie down "sur la lande;"
Call it, as you like—but the truth is, I swear,
"C'est bien pire que—la Contrabande."

Stolen kisses are ever the sweetest, we're told,
They sink like a "navire qui fende;"
And what's true of a kiss, is the same, too, of gold,
They're both, in their way, "Contrabande!"

When kings take your money, they won't even say,
"Mon ami le Dieu vous le rende;"
While even the priest, for a blessing takes pay,
"C'est partout et toujours, Contrabande."

The good things of life are not equal, I'm sure,
Then, how pleasant to make the "amende;"
To take from the wealthy, and give to the poor,
"Voila! que j'appelle, Contrabande."

Yet, as matters go, one must not deem it strange,
That even "La France et L'Irlande,"
If good wishes and friendship they simply exchange,
There are folks who call that, "Contrabande."

"*Vive la Contrabande, mes amis,*" shouted out Jacques, as he arose glass in hand, and made the room ring with the toast. And every voice repeated the words, in such imitations as they were able.

"'Tis an elegant song, any way," said Lanty, "if one only understood it all—and the tune's mighty like the 'Cruiskeen Lawn.'"

"Well, Harry," said Flahault, slapping his friend on the shoulder, "will the song persuade you to turn smuggler? I fear not. You'd rather practise your own 'Contrabande' among the bright eyes and dark locks of the capital. Well, there are worse 'metiers.' I have had a turn at it these fifteen years, and whether on the waters or Ontario, or Champlain, or scudding along under the fog-banks of the Scheldt, I never grew weary of it. But, now for a little business talk—where is the *Padre?* where's Father Luke? was he not to have been here to-night?"

Mary whispered the answer in the captain's ear.

"Ah! *parbleu*," exclaimed he aloud—"is it so? Practising a little 'Contrabande' of his own—trying to see a poor fellow safe over the frontier, into the next world."

"Fie for shame, Captain Jacques," said Mary, with pious horror. "That's not the way to talk of the holy offices."

"I wish I had old Maurice Dulang here, the priest of Trois Rivières, he's the boy could despatch them without trouble."

Neither Lanty nor Mary gave any encouragement to Flahault's new turn of the conversation, and so, addressing himself to Talbot, he went on—

"We were dining together one day, at the little inn at Trois Rivières, when a messenger came from Lachégon, for the Père to administer the last rites to a 'mourant.' Maurice promised to be there in half-an-hour, but never stirred—and though three other messengers came for him, the answer was all the same—until, at last came word, '*C'est trop tard, il est mort.*'

"'*Trop tard!*' said Maurice, 'not a bit of it; give me a pen and mk, and some paper.' With that he folded a piece, note fashion, and wrote—

"'MON CHER PIERRE—Fais ton petit possible pour cet pauvre diable, qui s'est glissé hors du monde sans mes soins. Apparement il etait bien pressé; mais tu l'arrangera pour le mieux.

"'Ton viel ami,

"'MAURICE DULANG.

"'St. Pierre, à la Conciergerie au Paradis.'

"'Put that in his mouth,' said Maurice, 'and there's no fear of him.'"

"'Twas a blessed gospel he gave him," said Mary, who did not comprehend the French portion of the story, "and sure it's as good as any thing."

"We all thought so, Mary. Poor Maurice related the story at Lyons, when he was led out to the guillotine—but though the Commissaire laughed heartily, and enjoyed it much, they had found a breviary in his portmanteau, and they couldn't let him off. Pauvre bête! To travel about the world with the 'pièce de conviction' in his possession. What, Harry, no more wine?"

"I thank you, no more for me, although that claret is a temptation."

"A bouquet, every glass of it! What say you, Master Lawler—does it suit your palate?"

"I begin to think it a taste cold, or so, by this time," said Lanty; 'I'm not genteel enough for wine, God help me—but it's time to turn in, any how—and there's Mary asleep already."

"I don't stir till I finish the flask," said Jacques, firmly; "and if you won't drink, you needn't grudge me your company. It's hard to say when we meet again. You go northward, Talbot, isn't that so?"

"Yes, and that's the point I wish to come to—where and how shall I find a mount?—I depended on this priest you spoke of to meet me, but he has not made his appearance."

"You never fell upon your legs more fortunately—here's your man for a horse, all Ireland over. Eh, Lanty, what's to be had now?"

"Devil a thing can be got for love or money," said Lanty. "If the gentleman only told me yesterday——"

"Yesterday, Master Lanty, we were riding white horses in the Western Ocean—but that's gone by—let us talk of to-day."

"My own hackney is here in the stable. If his honour likes him, I'll sell him; but he's a fancy beast, and must have a fancy price."

"Has he strength and speed for a fast ride," said Talbot, "and will his condition bear it?"

"I'll answer for it—you may push on to Cork in a hand gallop, if you give him ten minutes' rest, and a glass of whiskey at Macroom."

"That's enough—what's his price?"

"Take a look at him first," replied Lanty, "for if you are judge of a beast, you'll not refuse what I ask you." With these words he lighted a candle, and placed it in an old iron lantern, which hung against the wall, and opening a small door at the back of the cabin, proceeded, by a narrow passage cut in the rock, towards the stable, followed by Talbot, Flahault remaining where he was, as if sunk in meditation. Scarcely, however, had the two figures disappeared in the distance, when he shook Mary violently by the shoulder, and whispered in a quick, but collected tone—

"Mary—Mary, I say—is that fellow all safe?"

"Ay is he safe," said she, resuming her wonted calmness in a second. "Why do you ask now?"

"I'll tell you why—for myself I care not a sous—I'm here to-day, away to-morrow—but Talbot's deep in the business—his neck's in the halter—can we trust Lawler on his account—a man of rank and large fortune as he is, cannot be spared—what say you?"

"You may trust him, Captain," said Mary, "he knows his life would not be his own two hours if he turned informer—and then this Mr. Talbot, he's a great man you tell me?"

"He's a near kinsman of a great peer, and has a heavy stake in the game—that's all I know, Mary—and, indeed, the present voyage was more to bring him over, than any thing else—but hush, here they come."

"You shall have your money—you've no objection to French gold, I hope—for several years I have seen no other," said Talbot entering.

"I know it well," said Lanty, "and would just as soon take it, as if it had King George on it."

"You said forty pounds, fifty Louis is not far off—will that do?" said the youth, as he emptied a heavily filled purse of gold upon the table, and pushed fifty pieces towards the horse-dealer.

"As well as the best, sir," said Lanty, as he stored the money in his long leathern pocket-book, and placed it within his breast pocket.

"Will Mrs. M'Kelly accept this small token, as a keepsake," said the youth, while he took from around his neck a fine gold chain of Venetian work, and threw it gallantly over Mary's; "this is the first shelter I have found, after a long exile from my native land; and you, my old comrade, I have left you the pistols you took a fancy too, they are in the lugger—and so, now good-bye, all, I must take to the road at once—I should like to have met the priest, but all chance of that seems over."

Many and affectionate were the parting salutations between the young man and the others; for, although he had mingled but little in the evening's conversation, his mild and modest demeanour, added to the charm of his good looks, had won their favourable opinions; besides that he was pledged to a cause which had all their sympathies.

While the last good-bye was being spoken, Lanty had saddled and bridled the hackney, and led him to the door. The storm was still raging fiercely, and the night dark as ever.

"You'd better go a little ways up the glen, Lanty, beside him," said Mary, as she looked out into the wild and dreary night.

"'Tis what I mean to do," said Lanty, "I'll show him as far as the turn of the road."

Though the stranger declined the proffered civility, Lanty was firm in his resolution, and the young man, vaulting lightly into the saddle, called out a last farewell to the others, and rode on beside his guide.

Mary had scarcely time to remove the remains of the supper, when Lanty re-entered the cabin.

"He's the noble-hearted fellow, any way," said he, "and never took a shilling off the first price I asked him;" and with that he put his hand into his breast pocket to examine, once more, the strange coin or

France. With a start, a tremendous oath broke from him—"My money—my pocket-book is lost," exclaimed he, in wild excitement, while he ransacked pocket after pocket of his dress. "Bad luck to that glen, I dropt it out there, and with the torrent of water that's falling, it will never be found—och, murther, this is too bad."

In vain the others endeavoured to comfort and console him—all their assurances of its safety, and the certainty of its being discovered the next morning, were in vain. Lanty re-lighted the lantern, and muttering maledictions on the weather, the road, and his own politeness, he issued forth to search after his treasure, an occupation which, with all his perseverance, was unsuccessful; for when day was breaking, he was still groping along the road, cursing his hard fate, and every thing which had any share in inflicting it.

"The money is not the worst of it," said Lanty, as he threw himself down, exhausted and worn out, on his bed. "The money's not the worst of it—there was papers in that book, I wouldn't have seen for double the amount."

Long after the old smuggler was standing out to sea the next day, Lanty Lawler wandered backwards and forwards in the glen, now searching among the wet leaves that lay in heaps by the way side, or, equally in vain, sounding every rivulet and water-course which swept past. His search was fruitless; and well it might be—the road was strewn with fragments of rocks and tree-tops for miles—while even yet the swollen stream tore wildly past, cutting up the causeway in its passage, and foaming on amid the wreck of the hurricane.

Yet the entire of that day did he persevere, regardless of the beating rain, and the cold, drifting wind, to pace to and fro, his heart bent upon recovering what he had lost.

"Yer sowl is set upon money; devil a doubt of it, Lanty," said Mary, as dripping with wet, and shaking with cold, he at last re-entered the cabin; "sorra one of me would go rooting there, for a crock of goold, if I was sure to find it."

"It is not the money, Mary, I tould you before—it's something else was in the pocket-book," said he, half angrily, while he sat down to brood in silence over his misfortune.

"'Tis a letter from your sweetheart, then," said she, with a spice of jealous malice in her manner, for Lanty had more than once paid his addresses to Mary, whose wealth was reported to be something considerable

"May be it is, and may be it is not," was the cranky reply.

"Well, she'll have a saving husband, any way," said Mary, tartly, "and one that knows how to keep a good grip of the money."

The horse-dealer made no answer to this enconium on his economy, but with eyes fixed on the ground, pondered on his loss; meanwhile Mrs. M'Kelly's curiosity, piqued by her ineffectual efforts to obtain information, grew each instant stronger, and at last became irrepressible.

"Can't you say what it is you've lost? sure there's many a one goes by, here, of a Saturday to market—and if you leave the token——"

"There's no use in it—sorra bit," said he, despondingly.

"You know your own saycrets best," said Mary, foiled at every effort; "and they must be the dhroll saycrets too, when you're so much afraid of their being found out."

"Troth then," said Lanty, as a ray of his old gallantry shot across his mind; "troth then, there isn't one I'd tell a saycret too as soon as yourself, Mary M'Kelly; you know the most of my heart already, and why wouldn't you know it all?"

"Faix it's little I care to hear about it," said Mary, with an affectation of indifference, the most finished coquetry could not have surpassed. "Ye may tell it, or no, just as ye plaze."

"That's it now," cried Lanty—"that's the way of women, the whole world over; keep never minding them, and bad luck to peace or ease you get; and then try and plaze them, and see what thanks you have. I was going to tell you all about it."

"And why don't you?" interrupted she, half fearing lest she might have pulled the cord over-tight already; "why don't you tell it, Lanty dear?"

These last words settled the matter. Like the feather that broke the camel's back, these few and slight syllables were all that was wanting to overcome the horse-dealer's resistance.

"Well, here it is now," said he, casting, as he spoke, a cautious glance around, lest any chance listener should overhear him. "There was in that pocket-book, a letter, sealed with three big seals, that Father Luke gave me yesterday morning, and said to me, 'Lanty Lawler, I'm going over to Ballyvourney, and after that, I'm going on to Cork, and it's mighty likely I'll go as far as Dublin, for the Bishop may be there, and if he is, I must follow him; and here's a letter,' says he, 'that you must give the O'Donoghue with your own hands'—them was the words—'with your own hands, Lanty; and now swear you'll not leave itto any one else, but do as I tell you;' and, faix, I took my oath of it, and see, now, it's lost; may I never, but I don't know how I'll ever face him again; and sure God knows what was in it."

"And there was three seals on it," said Mary, musingly, as if such extraordinary measures of secrecy could bode nothing good.

"Each of them as big as a half-crown—and it was thick inside too; musha 'twas the evil day I ever set eyes on it!" and with this allusion to the lost money, which, by an adroitness of superstition, he coupled with the bad luck the letter had brought him, Lanty took his farewell of Mary, and, with a heavy heart, set out on his journey.

CHAPTER XI.

MISTAKES ON ALL SIDES.

THE occurrence so briefly mentioned by Flahault, of the night attack on the "Lodge," was not so easily treated by the residents; and so many different versions of the affair were in circulation, that Miss Travers, the only one whose information could have thrown any light upon it, was confused by the many marvels she heard, and totally unable to recall to mind what had really taken place. Sir Marmaduke himself examined the servants, and compared their testimony; but fear and exaggeration conspired to make the evidence valueless. Some asserting that there were at least a hundred assailants surrounding the house at one time—others, that they wore a kind of uniform, and had their faces blackened—some again had seen parties prowling about the premises during the day, and could positively swear to one man, "a tall fellow in a ragged blue coat, and without shoes or stockings"—no uncommon phenomena in those parts. But the butler negatived all these assertions, and stoutly maintained that there had been neither attack nor assailants—that the whole affair was a device of Terry's, to display his zeal and bravery; and, in short, that he had set fire to the rick in the haggard, and "got up" the affray for his own benefit.

In proportion as any fact occurred to throw discredit on the testimony of each, he who proffered it became a thousand times more firm and resolute in his assertion—circumstances dubious a moment before, were then suddenly remembered and sworn to, with numerous little aids to corroboration newly recalled to mind. To one point, however, all the evidence more or less converged, and that was, to accuse Terry of being the cause, or at least an accomplice in the transaction. Poor fellow—his own devotedness had made enemies for him every where—the alacrity with

which he mounted the burning stack was an offence not soon to be forgotten by those who neither risked life nor limb ; nor were the taunts he lavished on their sluggish backwardness to be forgiven now. Unhappily, too, Terry was not a favourite among the servants : he had never learnt how much deference is due from the ragged man to the pampered menial of a rich household ; he had not been trained to that subserviency or demeanour which should mark the intercourse of a poor, houseless, friendless creature like himself, with the tagged and lace-covered servants of a wealthy master. Terry, by some strange blunder of his nature, imagined that, in his freedom and independence, he was the better man of the two; he knew that to do nothing, was the prerogative of the great; and as he fulfilled that condition to a considerable extent, he fancied he should enjoy its privileges also. For this reason he had ever regarded the whole class of servants as greatly his inferiors; and although he was ready and willing to peril his life at any moment for Sir Marmaduke or his daughter, the merest common-place services he would refuse to the others, without a moment's hesitation. Neither intimidation could awe, nor bribery bend him—his nature knew not what fear was in any shape, save one—that of being apprehended and shot for a deserter—and as to any prospect of buying his good offices, that was totally out of the question.

In an Irish household Terry's character would have been appreciated at once. The respect which is never refused to any bereavement, but, in particular, to that greatest of all afflictions, would have secured for him, there, both forgiveness and affection—his waywardness and caprice would have been a law to the least good-tempered servant of the family; but Sir Marmaduke's retainers were all English, and had about as much knowledge of, or sympathy with, such a creature, as he himself possessed of London life and manners.

As his contempt was not measured by any scale of prudence, but coolly evinced on every occasion of their intercourse, they, one and all, detested him beyond bounds—most, asserting that he was a thorough-paced knave, whose folly was a garb assumed to secure a life of idleness —and all, regarding him in the light of a spy, ever ready to betray them to their master.

When, therefore, one after another, the servants persisted in either openly accusing or insinuating suggestions against Terry, Sir Marmaduke became sorely puzzled. It was true, he himself had witnessed his conduct the night before ; but if their version was correct, all his daring, energy, and boldness were so many proofs against him. He was, indeed, reluctant to think so badly of the poor fellow—but how discredit the evi-

dence of his entire household? His butler had been in his service for years—and oh! what a claim for all the exercise of evil influence—for all the petty tyranny of the low-minded and the base-born—tracking its way through eaves-dropping, and insinuating its venom in moments of unguarded freedom. His footman too——but why go on? His daughter alone rejected the notion with indignation; but in her eager vindication of the poor fellow's honour, her excitement militated against success—for age thus ever pronounces upon youth, and too readily confounds a high-spirited denunciation of wrong, with a mistaken, ill-directed enthusiasm. He listened, it is true, to all she said of Terry's devotedness and courage—of his artless, simple nature—of his single-minded, gentle character; but by a fatal tendency, too frequent as we advance in years, the scales of doubt ever lean against, and not to the side favourable to human nature, and as he shook his head mournfully, he said—

"I wish I did not suspect him."

"Send for him at least," said his daughter, as with an effort she restrained the emotion that agitated her; "speak to him yourself."

"To what end, my child, if he really is innocent?"

"Oh! yes, indeed—indeed he is," she exclaimed, as the tears at length fell fast upon her cheek.

"Well then, be it so," said Sir Marmaduke, as he rung the bell, and ordered Terry to be sent for.

While Miss Travers sat with her head buried in her hands, her father paced slowly up and down the room; and so absorbed was he in his thoughts, that he had not noticed Terry, who had meanwhile entered the room, and now stood respectfully beside the door. When the old man's eyes did fall on him, he started back, with horror and astonishment. The poor fellow's clothes were actually reduced to a mass of burned rags—one sleeve was completely gone, and, there, could be seen his bare arm scorched and blackened by the fire—a bandage of coarse linen wrapping the hand and fingers—a deep cut marked his brow—and his hair was still matted and clotted with the blood—while his face was of the colour of death itself.

"Can you doubt him now, father," whispered the young girl, as she gazed on the poor fellow, whose wandering eyes roamed over the ornaments of the chamber, in total unconsciousness of himself and his sufferings.

"Well, Terry," said Sir Marmaduke after a pause, "what account do you give of last night's business?"

"That's a picture of Keim-an-Eigh," said Terry, as he fixed his large eyes, open to their widest extent, on a framed drawing on the wall. "There's the Eagle's Cliff, and that's Murrow Waterfall—and there's

the lake—ay, and see if there isn't a boat on it. Well, well, but it's beautiful—one could walk up the shepherd's path there, where the goat is—ay, there's a fellow going up—musha, that's me—I'm going over to Cubber-na-creena, by the short cut."

"Tell me all you know of what happened last night, Terry," repeated Sir Marmaduke.

"It was a great fire, devil a doubt of it," said Terry, eagerly; "the blaze from the big stack was twice as high as the roof; but when I put the wet sail of the boat on it, it all went into black smoke; it nearly choked me."

'How did it catch fire first, Terry? can you tell us that?"

"They put a piece of tindir in it; I gave them an ould rag, and they rubbed it over with powder, and set it burning.'

"Who were they that did this?"

'The fellows that threw me down—what fine pistols they had, with silver all over them! They said that they would not beat me at all, and they didn't either. When I gave them the rag, they said, 'Now, my lad, we'll show you a fine fire;' and, true for them, I never seen a grander."

In this vague, rambling strain, did Terry reply to every question put to him, his thoughts ever travelling in one narrow circle. Who they were that fired the haggard, how many, and what kind of appearance they wore, he knew nothing of whatever; for in addition to his natural imbecility of mind, the shock of the adventure, and the fever of his wounds and bruises, had utterly routed the small remnant of understanding which usually served to guide him.

To one question only did his manner evince hesitation and doubt in the answer, and that was, when Sir Marmaduke asked him, how it happened that he should have been up at the Lodge at so late an hour, since the doors were all locked and barred a considerable time previous.

Terry's face flushed scarlet at the question, and he made no reply; he stole a sharp, quick glance towards Miss Travers, beneath his eyelids, but as rapidly withdrew it again, when his colour grew deeper and deeper.

The old man marked the embarrassment, and all his suspicions were revived at once. "You must tell me this, Terry," said he, in a voice of some impatience; "I insist upon knowing it."

"Yes, Terry, speak it out freely; you can have no cause for concealment," said Sybella, encouragingly.

"I'll not tell it!" said he, after a pause of some seconds, during which he seemed to have been agitating within himself all the reasons on either side—"I'll not tell it."

"Come, sir," said Sir Marmaduke angrily, "I must and will know this; your hesitation has a cause, and it shall be known."

The boy started at the tones so unusual to his ears, and stared at the speaker in mute astonishment.

"I am not displeased with you, Terry—at least I shall not be, if you speak freely and openly to me. Now, then, answer my question—What brought you about the Lodge at so late an hour?"

"I'll not tell," said the youth resolutely.

"For shame, Terry," said Sybella, in a low, soothing voice, as she drew near him; "how can you speak thus to my father. You would not have *me* displeased with you?"

The boy's face grew pale as death, and his lips quivered with agitation, while his eyes, glazed with heavy tears, were turned downwards; still he never spoke a word.

'Well, what think you of him, now?" said Sir Marmaduke in a whisper to his daughter.

"That he is innocent—perfectly innocent," replied she, triumphantly. "The poor fellow has his own reasons—shallow enough, doubtless—for his silence; but they have no spot or stain of guilt about them. Let me try if I cannot unfathom this business—I'll go down to the boat-house."

The generous girl delayed not a moment, but hastened from the room as she spoke, leaving Sir Marmaduke and Terry silently confronting each other. The moment of his daughter's departure, Sir Marmaduke felt relieved from the interference her good opinion of Terry suggested, and, at once altering his whole demeanour, he walked close up to him, and said—

"I shall but give you one chance more, sir. Answer my question now, or never."

"Never, then!" rejoined Terry, in a tone of open defiance.

The words, and the look by which they were accompanied, overcame the old man's temper in a moment, and he said—

"I thought as much. I guessed how deeply gratitude had sunk in such a heart. Away! Let me see you no more."

The boy turned his eyes from the speaker till they fell upon his own seared and burned limb, and the hand swathed in its rude bandage. That mute appeal was all he made, and then burst into a flood of tears. The old man turned away to hide his own emotions, and when he looked round, Terry was gone. The hall door lay open. He had passed out and gained the lawn—no sight of him could be seen.

"I know it, father, I know it all now," said Sybella, as she came running up the slope from the lake.

"It is too late, my child: he has gone—left us for ever, I fear," said Sir Marmaduke, as in shame and sorrow he rested his head upon her shoulder.

For some seconds she could not comprehend his words; and, when at last she did so, she burst forth—

"And, oh, father, think how we have wronged him. It was in his care and devotion to us, the poor fellow incurred our doubts. His habit was to sit beneath the window each night, so long as lights gleamed within. Till they were extinguished, he never sought his rest. The boatman tells me this, and says, his notion was, that God watches over the dark hours only, and that man's precautions were needed up to that time."

With sincere and heartfelt sorrow Sir Marmaduke turned away. Servants were despatched on foot and horseback to recover the idiot boy, and persuade him to return; but his path lay across a wild and mountain region, where few could follow; and at nightfall the messengers returned unsuccessful in their search.

If there was real sorrow over his departure in the parlour, the very opposite feeling pervaded the kitchen. There, each in turn exulted in his share of what had occurred, and took pains to exaggerate his claims to gratitude, for having banished one so unpopular and unfriended.

Alarm at the attack of the previous night, and sorrow for the unjust treatment of poor Terry, were not Sir Marmaduke's only emotions on this sad morning. His messenger had just returned from Carrig-na-curra with very dispiriting tidings of Herbert O'Donoghue. Respect for the feelings of the family under the circumstances of severe illness, had induced him to defer his intended visit to a more suitable opportunity; but his anxiety for the youth's recovery was unceasing, and he awaited the return of each servant sent to inquire after him, with the most painful impatience. In this frame of mind was he as evening drew near, and he wandered down his avenue to the road-side to learn some minutes earlier the last intelligence of the boy. It was a calm and peaceful hour; not a leaf moved in the still air; and all in the glen seemed bathed in the tranquil influence of the mellow sunset. The contrast to the terrific storm which so lately swept through the mountain-pass was most striking, and appealed to the old man's heart, as reflecting back the image of human life, so varying in its aspect, so

changeful of good and evil. He stood and meditated on the passages of his own life, whose tenor had, till now, been so equable, but whose fortunes seemed already to participate in the eventful fate of a distracted country. He regretted, deeply regretted, that he had ever come to Ireland. He began to learn how little power there is to guide the helm of human fortune, when once engaged in the stormy current, and he saw himself already the sport of a destiny he had never anticipated.

If he was puzzled at the aspect of a peasantry, highly gifted with intelligence, yet barbarously ignorant—active and energetic, yet indolent and fatalist—the few hints he had gathered of his neighbour, the O'Donoghue, amazed him still more; and by no effort of his imagination could he conceive the alliance between family pride and poverty—between the reverence for ancestry, and an utter indifference to the present. He could not understand such an anomaly as pretension without wealth; and the only satisfactory explanation he could arrive at, to himself, was, that in a wild and secluded tract, even so much superiority as this old chieftain possessed, attracted towards him the respect of all humbler and more lowly than himself, and made even his rude state seem affluence and power. If in his advances to the O'Donoghue he had observed all the forms of a measured respect, it was because he felt so deeply his debtor for a service, that he would omit nothing in the repayment: his gratitude was sincere and heartfelt, and he would not admit any obstacle in the way of acknowledging it.

Reflecting thus, he was suddenly startled by the sound of wheels coming up the glen—he listened, and now heard the low trot of a horse, and the admonitions of a man's voice, delivered in tones of anger and impatience. The moment after, an old-fashioned gig, drawn by a small miserable pony, appeared, from which a man had dismounted to ascend the hill.

"A fine evening, sir," said Sir Marmaduke, as the stranger, whose dress bespoke one of the rank of gentleman, drew near.

The other stopped suddenly, and surveyed the baronet without speaking; then, throwing down the collar of his great coat, which he wore high round his face, he made a respectful salute, and said—

"A lovely evening, sir. I have the honour to see Sir Marmaduke Travers, I believe? May I introduce myself, Doctor Roach, of Killarney?"

"Ah, indeed! Then you are probably come from Mr. O'Donoghue's house? Is the young gentleman better this evening?"

Roach shook his head dubiously, but made no reply.

"I hope, sir, you don't apprehend danger to his life?" asked Sir Marmaduke, with an effort to appear calm as he spoke.

"Indeed I do, then," said Roach, firmly; "the mischief's done already."

"He's not dead?" said Sir Marmaduke, almost breathless in his terror.

"Not dead; but the same as dead: effusion will carry him off some time to-morrow."

"And can you leave him in this state? Is there nothing to be done? Nothing you could suggest?" cried the old man, scarcely able to repress his indignant feeling at the heartless manner of the doctor.

"There's many a thing one might try," said Roach, not noticing the temper of the question, "for the boy is young; but for the sake of a chance, how am I to stay away from my practice and my other patients? And indeed slight a prospect as he has of recovery, my own of a fee is slighter still. I think I've all the corn in Egypt in my pocket this minute," said he, slapping his hand on his purse: "one of the late king's guineas, wherever they had it lying by till now."

"I am overjoyed to have met you, sir," said Sir Marmaduke hastily, and by a great exertion concealing the disgust this speech suggested. "I wish for an opinion about my daughter's health—a cold, I fancy—but to-morrow will do better. Could you return to Mr. O'Donoghue's to-night? I have not a bed to offer you here. This arrangement may serve both parties, as I fervently hope something may yet be done for the youth."

"I'll visit Miss Travers in the morning with pleasure."

"Don't leave him, sir, I entreat you, till I send over; it will be quite time enough when you hear from me: let the youth be your first care, doctor; in the mean while accept this slight retainer, for I beg you to consider your time as given to me now," and with that he pressed several guineas into the willing palm of the doctor.

As Roach surveyed the shining gold, his quick cunning divined the old baronet's intentions, and with a readiness long habit had perfected, he said—

"The case of danger before all others, any day. I'll turn about at once and see what can be done for the lad."

Sir Marmaduke leaned towards him, and said some words hastily in a low whispering voice.

"Never fear—never fear, Sir Marmaduke," was the reply, as he mounted to the seat of his vehicle, and turned the pony's head once more down the glen.

"Lose no time, I beseech you," cried the old man, waving his hand in token of adieu; nor was the direction unheeded, for, using his whip

with redoubled energy, the doctor sped along the road at a canter, which threatened annihilation to the frail vehicle at every bound of the animal.

"Five hundred!" muttered Sir Marmaduke to himself, as he looked after him. "I'd give half my fortune to see him safe through it."

Meanwhile Roach proceeded on his way, speculating on all the gain this fortunate meeting might bring to him, and then meditating what reasons he should allege to the O'Donoghue for his speedy return.

"I'll tell him a lucky thought struck me in the glen," muttered he; "or, what! if I said I forgot something—a pocket-book, or case of instruments—any thing will do;" and, with this comfortable reflection, he urged his beast onward.

The night was falling as he once more ascended the steep and narrow causeway, which led to the old keep; and here, now, Kerry O'Leary was closing the heavy but time-worn gate, and fastening it with many a bolt and bar, as though aught within could merit so much precaution. The sound of wheels seemed suddenly to have caught the huntsman's ear, for he hastily shut down the massive hasp that secured the bar of the gate, and as quickly opened a little latched window, which, barred with iron, resembled the grated aperture of a convent door.

"You're late this time, any how," cried Kerry. "Tramp back again, friend, the way you came; and be thankful it's myself seen you; for, by the blessed Father, if it was Master Mark was here, you'd carry away more lead in your skirts than you'd like."

"What, Kerry?—what's that you're saying?" said the astonished doctor; "don't you know me, man?"

"Kerry's my name, sure enough; but artful as you are, you'll just keep the other side of the door. Be off now, in God's name. 'Tis a fair warning I give you; and faix if you won't listen to rayson, you might hear worse;" and as he spoke, that ominous sound, the click of a gun-cock, was heard, and the muzzle of a carbine peeped between the iron bars.

"Tear-and-ounds! ye scoundrel! you're not going to fire a bullet at me?"

"'Tis slugs they are," was the reply, as Kerry adjusted the piece, and seemed to take as good an aim as the darkness permitted; "divil a more nor slugs, as you'll know soon. I'll count three, now, and may I never wear boots, if I don't blaze, if you're not gone before it's over. Here's one," shouted he, in a louder key.

"The saints protect me, but I'll be murdered," muttered old Roach, blessing himself, but unable from terror to speak aloud, or stir from the spot.

"Here's two!" cried Kerry, still louder.

"I'm going!—I'm going! give me time to leave this blasted place; bad luck to the day and the hour I ever saw it."

"It's too late," shouted Kerry. "Here's three!" and as he spoke bang went the piece, and a shower of slugs and duck-shot came peppering over the head and counter of the old pony; for in his fright, Roach had fallen on his knees to pray. The wretched quadruped, thus rudely saluted, gave a plunge and a kick, and then wheeled about with an alacrity long forgotten, and scampered down the causeway with the old gig at his heels, rattling as if it were coming in pieces. Kerry broke into a roar of laughter, and screamed out—

"I'll give you another yet, begorra! that's only a true copy; but you'll get the original now, you ould varmint!"

A heavy groan from the wretched doctor, as he sank in a faint, was the only response; for in his fear he thought the contents of the piece were in his body.

"Musha, I hope he isn't dead," said Kerry, as he opened the wicket cautiously, and peeped out with a lantern. "Mister Cassidy—Mister James, get up now—it's only joking I was.—Holy Joseph! is he kilt?" and overcome by a sudden dread of having committed murder, Kerry stepped out, and approached the motionless figure before him. "By all that's good, I've done for the sheriff," said he, as he stood over the body. "Oh! wirra, wirra! who'd think a few grains of shot would kill him."

"What's the matter here? who fired that shot?" said a deep voice, as Mark O'Donoghue appeared at Kerry's side, and snatching the lantern, held it down till the light fell upon the pale features of the doctor.

"I'm murdered! I'm murdered!" was the faint exclamation of old Roach. "Hear me, these are my dying words, Kerry O'Leary murdered me."

"Where are you wounded? where's the ball?" cried Mark, tearing open the coat and waistcoat in eager anxiety.

"I don't know, I don't know; it's inside bleeding I feel."

"Nonsense, man, you have neither bruise nor scar about you; you're frightened, that's all. Come, Kerry, give a hand, and we'll help him in."

But Kerry had fled; the idea of the gallows had just shot across his mind, and he never waited for any further disclosures about his victim; but deep in the recesses of a hay-loft he lay cowering in terror, and endeavouring to pray. Meanwhile Mark had taken the half lifeless body on his shoulder, and with the ease and indifference he would have bestowed upon an inanimate burden, coolly carried him into the parlour, and threw him upon a sofa.

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